

## Nutritional status of pregnant ladies in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh

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Pregnant women have been widely recognized as a vulnerable group from health point of view. They need more food than normal person for the proper nourishment of the growing fetus. The field of nutrition of the pregnant women, particularly in rural area, has been sadly neglected. Against this backdrop, the study was carried out among 165 pregnant women from 07 Tehsil of Shivpuri district. A pre-tested structured interview schedule was used for the collection of general information. 24 hour recall method of diet survey was applied for the collection of dietary information. It was found that the mean iron, calcium, carotene and folic acid were much lower than the RDA volumes. In spite of better education and high-income, nutrition intake was lower than RDA in case of many sample women. Based upon the analysis, the study finally emphasizes the need for popularizing cultivation of low cost nutrition greens and vegetables in each household and imparting nutrition education to the women.

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### INTRODUCTION

The nutritional status of the woman decides her reproductive performance, particularly the outcome of pregnancy. A woman who is well fed and healthy can complete pregnancy successfully giving birth to a healthy normal child. If, on the other hand, the woman is poorly nourished we pay a heavy price-the ill health and death of mother and child. Pregnant women, together with young children and lactating mothers represent the groups most vulnerable to nutritional deprivation. Most vulnerable, because their nutritional requirements are proportionally higher and the effects of malnutrition are severe and long-lasting (Bergner and Susser, 1970; Usher, 1970; Brasel and Winick, 1972; Simpson *et al.*, 1975. Yet, assessment of nutritional status during pregnancy

is not easy. The end result of pregnancy, the newborn depends for its growth in utero on the nutrients transferred from the mother, and its birth weight is dependent to a large extent on her nutritional status, not only during pregnancy but before it (Habicht, 1973; Read *et al.*, 1975, Klein *et al.*, 1976 and Frisanchio *et al.*, 1977).

Adequate nutritional status of expectant mothers is essential for their health and pregnancy outcomes. Due to increased nutritional requirements pregnancy is a critical period for meeting the body's demand for macro- and micronutrients. Thus, anaemia and vitamin A deficiency (VAD) are highly prevalent nutrient deficiencies encountered in pregnant women, affecting 53.8 million (55.8 %) and 7.2 million (6.8 %) on a global scale, respectively (West, 2002 and Mason *et al.*, 2001).

Both deficiencies have been shown to result in serious health consequences including increased morbidity and mortality of both mother and child. In addition, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy is still high in most developing countries, 33 per cent on average, reaching from 8 per cent in East Asia to 55 per cent in West Africa (Boyd, 2000).

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